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Arem language

The **Arem language** (*Cmbrau* [cmrawˀ]) is an endangered language spoken in a small area on either side of the Laos–Vietnam border. It is an Austro-Asiatic language that is a member of the Vietic language family. Specifically, it is a member of the Chut language group, which is one of the six Vietic languages. This language is considered severely endangered by UNESCO. Like other Vietic languages, the Arem language makes use of a tonal or phonational system that is unique to Vietic languages. Like many southern Vietic Languages, the Arem language also makes use of pre-syllables or sesquisyllables within the language.[3]

Arem lacks the breathy phonation common to most Vietic languages, but does have glottalized final consonants.[4]

Arem	
Native to	Laos, Vietnam
Native speakers	270 (1996–2009)[1]
Language family	Austroasiatic ▪ Vietic ▪ Chut ? ▪ **Arem**
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	`aem`
Glottolog	`arem1240 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/arem1240)`[2]

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History and background

Arem is an ethnographic term to describe a group of indigenous people that reside on the border of Southern Vietnam and Laos. The people prefer to call themselves Cmbrau [cmrawˀ].[3] However, because this is the only attested [cm-] sesquisyllabic structure in the language, it is theorized that this may also be an ethnographic term that was borrowed from another nearby language.[3] The Arem people were only known to exist by local populations of Vietnam until 1959, when they were discovered by the Vietnamese military.[3] Previously, the local authorities had thought them members of the local Bru khùa community. The Arem population was only 53 people in 1960: 30 men and 23 women.[5] The most recent survey of the area in 1999 indicated that there were 102 Arem people.[6] Of these 102 Arem people, only around 25% of the population was estimated to be using the Arem language on a consistent basis.[6] All speakers of the Arem language are bilingual speakers of Vietnamese and some are also fluent in Khùa and/or Lao as well.[7]

Grammatical properties

The Arem language makes use of both monosyllabic words and sesquisyllabic words. It is estimated that 55-60% of the Arem language's consists of sesquisyllabic words. This is much higher than the majority of other Vietic languages that typically utilize sesquisyllables in only 35-40% of their lexicon, if the particular language contains any sesquisyllables at all.[3]

Further reading / External links

- Enfield, N.J.; Diffloth, Gérard (2009). "Phonology and sketch grammar of Kri, a Vietic language of Laos" (http://pubman.mpdl.mpg.de/pubman/item/escidoc:107912:5/component/escidoc:204877/Enfield_2009_Phonology%20and%20sketch%20grammar%20of%20Kri.pdf) (PDF). *Cahiers de Linguistique Asie Orientale*. **38** (1): 3–69. doi:10.1163/1960602809x00063 (https://doi.org/10.1163%2F1960602809x00063). (see note on talk page)
- http://lacito.vjf.cnrs.fr/pangloss/languages/Arem_en.php Arem corpus provided by le Centre national de la recherche scientifique

References

1. Arem (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/aem/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Arem" (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/arem1240). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
3. FERLUS, Michel. 2014. Arem, a Vietic Language. *Mon-Khmer Studies* 43.1:1-15 (ICAAL5 special issue)
4. "The Vietic Branch" (http://sealang.net/mk/vietic.htm). *sealang.net*. Retrieved 2019-03-25.
5. Vương Hoàng Tuyên. 1963. *Các dân tộc nguồn gốc Nam-Á ở miền bắc Việt-Nam* [Ethnic groups of Austro-Asiatic origin in North Vietnam]. Nhà xuất bản Giáo Dục, Hà-Nội. [Arem: vocabulary p. 71; Compare list of a hundred words in Viet-Muong languages, including Arem; see fold-out page V-VIII, end of the book]
6. Trần Trí Dõi. 1999. *Nghiên cứu ngôn ngữ các dân tộc thiểu số Việt Nam* [Study of languages of ethnic minorities in Vietnam]. Nhà xuất bản đại học quốc gia Hà-Nội. [Arem: demography p.110; vocabulary p. 16 and 37]
7. Trần Trí Dõi. 1995. *Thực trạng kinh tế và văn hóa của ba nhóm tộc người đang có nguy cơ bị biến* mất *[Actual state of the economy and culture of three endangered ethnic groups]. Nhà xuất bản văn hóa dân tộc. [Arem: population pp. 71-76; no vocabulary]*

- Ferlus, Michel. 2014. Arem, a Vietic Language (https://web.archive.org/web/20150616021405/http://www.mksjournal.org/mks43ferlus.pdf). Mon-Khmer Studies 43.1:1-15 (ICAAL5 special issue).

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